

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Acton
Community Preservation Committee
September 22, 2011
Acton Memorial Library

Attending: Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Janet Adachi (BOS), Tory Beyer, Corrina Roman-Kreuze, Roland Bourdon, Betsy Mercier, Doré Hunter. Also present: Steve Noone
Finance Committee observer, Roland Bartl Planning Department
Audience: Kathryn Acerbo-Bachmann

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Bourdon at 7:35PM.

Election of Officers:

Roland Bourdon relayed to the committee that current Chairman Walter Foster had called Roland regarding Chair position of CPC and indicated that he would be willing to chair the committee again due to potential bonding issues in upcoming applications. Roland indicated he would be agreeable to another term as Vice Chair. Janet nominated Roland Bourdon for Chair of CPC and Corrina seconded the nomination. Susan nominated Walter for Vice Chair, Corrina seconded. Corrina indicated that she would be unable to serve as an officer this year due to increased work constraints. Committee decided it would be best to wait to vote for Vice Chair and Clerk positions at the next meeting when those being nominated are present. Committee felt that we needed to vote for Chair this evening. All members voted in favor of Roland Bourdon's nomination as Chair. Election for other two officers will occur at the next meeting.

Roland opened the Public Hearing for the 2012 CPC Plan to ascertain needs of the community.

Kathryn Acerbo-Bachmann from the Acton Historic District Commission indicated she wished to get a sense of the committee on two potential projects under the historic category.

The first potential project was for a landscaping plan for the new South Acton train station. The MBTA has approximately 60,000.00 for landscaping – most of which will go to hardscape. Kathryn estimates 150,000 dollars will be required for landscape – which is a key component to requirements of Section 106 of the MA Historic Commission. This landscape feature is key to connecting the historic neighborhoods, conservation space and the rail trail. The money would be used for trees and other plantings. This will also be discussed at SATSAC meeting – could this be a SATSAC/HDC/HC co-sponsored project? Landscaping time frame is 2013-2014. South Acton neighbor is donating design services. Dean Charter is on board with tree planting. Roland Bartl asked if this will be deemed eligible. Kathryn believes that due to section 106 requirement, it may be eligible. Steve Noone suggested signing "someone" up for maintenance as CPA funds cannot be used for maintenance.

Next, Kathryn spoke about a fund to help owners of homes in the three historic districts preserve their historic properties. There has been a problem with homes that have suffered demolition by neglect and the HDC want to work to preserve the buildings. Kathryn mentioned that Cambridge and 12 other communities have some sort of revolving fund for low/no interest loans for home owners to preserve their historic homes. Other communities have coupled this with a bylaw which compels property owners to preserve buildings as a matter of stewardship. HDC wishes to start with a fund instead of a bylaw to see how this goes and that punitive measures are not needed.

The committee asked how the fund would be administered. Perhaps HDC in collaboration with a bank? Kathryn estimated a fund of \$200,000.00 to start. These funds could be used to make up the difference between vinyl windows and historically correct wood windows.

Roland Bartl and Roland Bourdon would prefer to see this as a revolving loan – can a local bank help with the administration part?

Kathryn asked about historic homes qualifying under community housing in CPA. Committee pointed out many of the challenges of meeting housing requirements and the additional burden that a historic property would place on an already stressed financial situation. Kathryn asked about housing that falls somewhere in between the affordable category and those who can easily afford Acton. The committee agreed that there is no program that specifically addresses this bracket, but that it would not qualify under the affordable portion of CPA. Janet offered to follow up with Nancy Tavernier, Acton Community Housing Chairman, with respect to affordable housing in historic properties.

The committee thanked Kathryn for her participation in the hearing.

Susan had some questions on page 8 of the CPC Plan regarding Open Space. As Walter and Peter were not at the meeting, the Committee suggested that this section could be amended at our next meeting, Susan found this acceptable.

Corrina moves to approve the CPC 2012 Plan. Janet seconds the motion; all vote in favor.

Items for next agenda:

Elect Vice Chair

Elect Clerk

Fix/amend Open Space section

Betsy asked about eligibility for a potential recreation project – making Gower playground 100% accessible. Is this “new” if it is serving a population that has not been served? Committee expressed concern that this could be construed as an

“improvement”. Suggested waiting until the law has been updated. Roland Bartl suggested that Recreation Director Cathy Fochtman talk with Town Counsel.

Minutes of the 06/30/2011 CPC meeting were approved as corrected. Motion by Janet, seconded by Tory – all voted in favor.

Steve Noone suggested inviting John Murray or Steve Barrett to give a primer on bonding to CPC.

Invite proponents of potential projects to next meeting.

Susan was asked to arrange a tour of the upper part of Town Hall with Dean Charter.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55PM

Documents Discussed: DRAFT 2012 CPC Plan

Minutes: June 30, 2011

Agenda: September 22, 2011

Included in packet but not discussed: Correspondence/update from Glenn Berger on Exchange Hall dated September 1, 2011 to the Architectural Access Board, Copy of approved application from Department of Interior's Standards.

Form CP-1 Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2011

Conference Room Reservation Meetings for 2012

Next Meetings: October 13, 2011 7:30PM